5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
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still living, to whom I owe thanks, are Wolf Calf, Big Nose, Heavy Runner, Young Bear Chief, Wolf Tail, Rabid Wolf, Running Rabbit, White Calf, All-are-his-Children, Double Runner, Lone Medicine Person, and many others. 115

The stories here given cover a wide range of subjects, but are fair examples of the oral literature of the Blackfeet. They deal with religion, the origin of things, the performances of medicine men, the bravery and single-heartedness of warriors. 121 538

It will be observed that in more than one case two stories begin in the same way, and for a few paragraphs are told in language which is almost identical. In like manner it is often to be noted that in different stories the same incidents occur. This is all natural enough, when it is remembered that the range of the Indians' experiences is very narrow. The incidents of camp life, of hunting and war excursions, do not offer a very wide variety of conditions; and of course the stories of the people deal chiefly with matters with which they are familiar. They are based on the every-day life of the narrators.

The reader of these Blackfoot stories will not fail to notice many curious resemblances to tales told among other distant and different peoples. Their similarity to those current among the Ojibwas, and other Eastern Algonquin tribes, is sufficiently obvious and altogether to be expected, nor is it at all remarkable that we should find, among the Blackfeet, tales identical with those told by tribes of different stock far to the south; but it is a little startling to see in the story of the Worm Pipe a close parallel to the classical myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. In another of the stories is an incident which might have been taken bodily from the Odyssey. [71]

Well-equipped students of general folk-lore will find in these tales much to interest them, and to such may be left the task of commenting on this collection.

[p. xviii is blank]

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The children, at least the boys, played about and did as they pleased. Not so with the girls. Their duties began at a very early age. They carried wood and water for their mothers, sewed moccasins, and as soon as they were strong enough, were taught to tan robes and furs, make lodges, travois, and do all other woman's — and so menial — work. The boys played at mimic warfare, hunted around in the brush with their bows and arrows, made mud images of animals, and in summer spent about half their time in the water. In winter, they spun tops on the ice, slid down hill on a contrivance made of buffalo ribs, and hunted rabbits.

Shortly after noon, the hunters began to return, bringing in deer, antelope, buffalo, elk, occasionally bear, and, sometimes, beaver which they had trapped. The camp began to be more lively. In all directions persons could be heard shouting out invitations to feasts. Here a man was lying back on his couch singing and drumming; there a group of young men were holding a war dance; everywhere the people were eating, singing, talking, and joking. As the light faded from the western sky and darkness spread over the camp, the noise and laughter increased. In many lodges, the people held social dances, the women, dressed in their best gowns, ranged on one side, the men on the other; all sung, and three or four drummers furnished an accompaniment; the music was lively if somewhat jerky. At intervals the people rose and danced, the "step" being a bending of the knees and swinging of the body, the women holding their arms and hands in various graceful positions.

With the night came the rehearsal of the wondrous doings of the gods. These tales may not be told in the daytime. Old Man would not like that, and would cause any one who narrated them while it was light to become blind. All Indians are natural orators, but some far exceed others in their powers of expression. Their attitudes, gestures, and signs are so suggestive that they alone would enable one to

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
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105 understand the stories they relate. I have seen these story-
512 tellers so much in earnest, so entirely carried away by the
537 tale they were relating, that they fairly trembled with ex-
538 citement. They held their little audiences spell-bound. The women dropped their half-sewn moccasin from their listless hands, and the men let the pipe go out. These stories for the most part were about the ancient gods and their miraculous doings. They were generally related by the old men, warriors who had seen their best days. Many of them are recorded in this book. They are the explanations of the phenomena of life, and contain many a moral for the instruction of youth.

535 The *I-kŭn-ŭh'-kah-tsi* contributed not a little to the enter-
575 tainment of every-day life. Frequent dances were held by the different bands of the society, and the whole camp always turned out to see them. The animal-head masks, brightly painted bodies, and queer performances were dear to the Indian heart.

484 Such was the every-day life of the Blackfeet in the buffalo
492 days. When the camp moved, the women packed up their possessions, tore down the lodges, and loaded everything on the backs of the ponies or on the travois. Meantime the chiefs had started on, and the soldiers — the Brave band of the *I-kun-uh'-kah-tsi* — followed after them. After these leaders had gone a short distance, a halt was made to allow the column to close up. The women, children, horses, and dogs of the camp marched in a disorderly, straggling fashion, often strung out in a line a mile or two long. Many of the men rode at a considerable distance ahead, and on each side of the marching column, hunting for any game that might be found, or looking over the country for signs of enemies.

484 Before the Blackfeet obtained horses in the very first
175 years of the present century, and when their only beasts of
492 burden were dogs, their possessions were transported by these animals or on men's backs. We may imagine that in
482 those days the journeys made were short ones, the camp travelling but a few miles.

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that expressed in the foregoing quotation. The statement 776
that Old Man was merely light personified would be beyond his comprehension, and if he did understand what was meant, he would laugh at it, and aver that *Na'pi* was a real man, a flesh and blood person like himself.

The character of Old Man, as depicted in the stories told 776
of him by the Blackfeet, is a curious mixture of opposite at- 538
tributes. In the serious tales, such as those of the creation, he is spoken of respectfully, and there is no hint of the impish qualities which characterize him in other stories, in which he is powerful, but also at times impotent; full of all wisdom, yet at times so helpless that he has to ask aid from the animals. Sometimes he sympathizes with the people, and at others, out of pure spitefulness, he plays them malicious tricks that are worthy of a demon. He is a combination of strength, weakness, wisdom, folly, childishness, and malice.

Under various names Old Man is known to the Crees, 776
Chippeways, and other Algonquins, and many of the stories 171
that are current among the Blackfeet are told of him among those tribes. The more southern of these tribes do not venerate him as of old, but the Plains and Timber Crees of the north, and the north Chippeways, are said still to be firm believers in Old Man. He was their Creator, and is still their chief god. He is believed in less by the younger generation than the older. The Crees are regarded by the Indians of the Northwest as having very powerful medicine, and this all comes from Old Man.

Old Man can never die. Long ago he left the Blackfeet 776
and went away to the West, disappearing in the mountains. Before his departure he told them that he would always take care of them, and some day would return. Even now, [825]
many of the old people believe that he spoke the truth, and that some day he will come back, and will bring with him the buffalo, which they believe the white men have

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

winning horse was often fifty to one hundred yards in the lead. Sometimes one horse played out and was not able to finish. Rarely was it a close race all the way.

After the race the gleeful winners claimed the articles they had won. If a loser protested that the race had not been fair, men of the winning society knocked him down and rubbed dirt or manure on him. With the winning horse in the lead, the victorious society marched back to camp, once around the camp circle, and stopped at the lodge of the leader. The winning horse was entrusted to the care of an old man, who picketed it near the lodge and sang to it. The men of the winning society sang, danced, and rejoiced late into the night.

Members of the losing society might consider this a good time to organize a raiding party in quest of a fast horse from an enemy camp—one that would enable them to turn the tables on their rivals the next summer.[19]

Certainly the fun-loving Blackfeet had no dearth of recreational opportunities, active or sedentary, summer or winter. Nor were their activities confined to the daytime. At night the Indians gathered for social dances. Usually the women sat on one side, the men opposite them, with three or four drummers in the center. As the drummers beat a lively rhythm on their tambourine-like instruments, individuals rose and danced about, bending their knees, stomping their feet, and swaying their bodies gracefully in time to the music.

They whiled away the long winter nights with story-telling. Many of the older men were masters of the art of telling a good story, and their repertory was both extensive and varied. There were myths of the stars, of Napi's amusing adventures, and of the origins of sacred rituals and common customs. There were tales of animals and of the heroic deeds of Blackfoot warriors in their conflicts with many enemies. Some of these stories were humorous, even vulgar; some were educational and inspirational.

[19] Ewers, "Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture," B.A.E. *Bull.* 159, 227-34. The popular intersociety horse races ended with the breakdown of Blackfoot men's societies in the 1870's.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

[ca. 1850]

They had one quality in common—they were all fascinating. As the old storyteller talked on into the night, his listeners might become drowsy. It was considered good etiquette for members of his audience to interrupt him with an occasional "ah" to show their appreciation and to let him know they were still awake. 538

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Crow warriors eager to revenge the many depredations of Blood Indians upon their people.[16]

Doubtless a great many visits of adventurous Blackfoot Indians to far-off tribes prior to 1850 have never been recorded. At the very beginning of the nineteenth century David Thompson learned that there were young men among the Piegans who, wishing to distinguish themselves, "mix with other tribes and learn their languages, and become acquainted with their countries and their mode of hunting."[17] This primitive equivalent of travel abroad must have had educational value not only for the participants but also for their entire tribes. The few examples of visits to distant tribes I have cited clearly indicate that Blackfoot travelers brought back more than knowledge of geography and of the languages and hunting methods of alien peoples. Some of them returned with sacred objects and rituals which enriched the religious life of their own people.

Around their own campfires at night they must have retold for the edification of their stay-at-home friends and relatives many beautiful legends they had heard from the lips of members of far-off tribes. Probably the common elements in the mythology of many Plains Indian tribes were the result of the repetition of tales or episodes learned and retold by such traveling storytellers. It would have been strange indeed if Blackfoot material culture and crafts were not also enriched by the detailed observations of keen-eyed and quick-witted Indian travelers who had opportunities to take mental notes on the daily lives of other tribes.

Nor was the lack of a common spoken language a serious barrier to communication of ideas between distant tribes. Through the sign language the Algonkian-speaking Blackfoot traveler could converse with Siouan-speaking Mandans and Hidatsas, with Salish-speaking Flatheads, or with such distant Algonkian tribes as the Arapahoes and Cheyennes, whose oral dialects differed markedly from that of the Blackfeet. The gestures of an

[16] Henry A. Boller, *Among the Indians: Eight Years in the Far West, 1858–1866*, 302–303.

[17] Thompson, *Narrative*, 366.

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

could kill buffalo encouraged the slaughter of many more animals than the Indians needed for subsistence and hastened buffalo extermination.

INFLUENCE ON CAMP MOVEMENTS AND POSSESSIONS

"In the old days, before the Blackfoot had horses, they were moving camp with dog-travois." So reads the start of a Blackfoot tale describing the origin of the Bear Lodge (Wissler and Duvall, 1908, p. 92). Many Blackfoot origin tales begin with references to the use of dogs as beasts of burden in the days before these Indians acquired horses. (See pp. 291, 295, this bulletin.) There can be no serious doubt of the historical validity of such initial statements. Probably use of dogs as beasts of burden was common to all Plains Indian tribes in pre-horse times. We know that Spanish explorers saw southern Plains tribes moving camp via dog transport in the 16th century (Winship, 1896, pp. 504–527; Onate *in* Bolton, 1916, pp. 226–227); that Bourgmont saw pedestrian Kansas traveling with loaded dogs in 1724 (Margry, 1886, vol. 6, p. 414); and that La Vérendrye witnessed the use of dog travois by horseless Assiniboin, near neighbors of the Blackfoot, in 1738 (La Vérendrye, 1927, pp. 317–318).

Both dog packing and the dog travois survived among the Blackfoot in historic times. William Gordon (in Chardon, 1932, p. 342) and John Work (1923, p. 129), fur traders, saw Blackfoot war parties packing moccasins, ammunition, and provisions on the backs of dogs in the early 19th century. In March, 1824, Alexander Ross (1913, p. 373) met "eight Piegan and a drove of dogs in train with provisions and robes for trade at the Flathead post." My aged informants recalled that even in their youth, in the waning years of buffalo hunting, families poor in horses made extensive use of dog travois, while heavy winter snows sometimes rendered horses useless for carrying or dragging loads, causing whole bands to revert temporarily to the use of dog transport.

Compared with the horse the dog was a bearer of relatively light burdens. Assuming that the dog employed by the Indians in pre-horse times was the same size and strength as the Indian dog of the 19th century, described by Bradley (1923, p. 278) as "very similar in appearance to the large gray wolf," I estimate a strong dog was capable of packing a load of approximately 50 pounds or of dragging 75 pounds on the travois.[97] Although early descriptions of the number of dogs seen under load in moving camps of Plains Indians mention as many as several hundred animals, the proportion of dogs to

[97] These estimates are based upon a survey of numerous estimates of the weight of dog loads appearing in the Plains Indian literature, as well as testimony of elder informants.

824 Travois and tipi
335 poles were made from Pinus contorta while the young
[804] trees furnished back-rest poles and bed supports. The back-rest poles were cut about five forearms in length and dried over a fire of rotten logs. One end of the pole was perforated and the other end sharpened. Then a
[531] stick was inserted through the hole and the pole etched. Later it was
[237] painted red and blue with buffalo shoulder-blade applicators. Back-rest
[211] poles were often notched to record the number of camp moves.

802 Story-sticks were prepared by older men and presented to children in
538 return for favors. The sticks were notched to count the number of stories
237 that the man would tell the child. They were often varnished with a
824 solution of boiled hoof and steer phallus and sometimes red ochre was added. Then the stick was polished with a piece of rawhide. Story-sticks were
[342] sometimes used to hang tipi doors.

[824] Wind chimes were made and presented to newly married couples. Little sticks were also prepared and notched to act as fasteners on designated foot-storage bags.

[415] Bowls were fashioned from pine burls (Fig. 35). The process was to
[237] apply grease to the burl, scrape with a rough stone, apply more grease and repeat the process until the bowl was finished. If grease was not used the bowl would crack.

[381] The resin of Pinus contorta was boiled with buffalo phallus and used as
[314] a glue for headdresses and bows. It was also applied to moccasins for
[237] waterproofing.
[294]

824 Polyporus spp.
278

This fungus was often taken from the mountains (stolen occasionally from the Kooteney Indians) or detached from willows. Then it was scraped with a knife and attached to "Weasel-robes" when it could be used in emergency first-aid treatment. It was a styptic on wounds and boiled with Psoralea

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 119]

115 spot for dozens of grandchildren, nephews and nieces, cousins, aunts, and so on. For a number of years now she has looked after my old grandmother as well. When she and my father first married they wintered in canvas tents, with the temperatures often far below zero. When I was small we all lived together in a one-room log house built by my father and his uncle.

I also collected stories from my grandmother, Hilda 121 Strangling Wolf, who is in her nineties. However, many of the stories that I got from my mother and grandmother are along the lines of family history, which will be more valuable to my children and relatives than to readers of this book. I wanted to present the stories of more women in our tribe than just those to whom I am immediately related. That is how I came to call this book project *The Ways of My Grandmothers.* By tribal custom, all the old women of the past are my grandmothers.

115 Another major influence in my life—and in compiling this book—has been Paula Weasel Head, who spent a lifetime becoming one of the wisest women among the four tribes of the Blackfoot Nation. Her husband and my father are adopted brothers, and she has taken me for an adopted child, which I have considered a very great honor. Her advice has often been sought by both men and women on all kinds of tribal religious and social topics. Her knowledge of the tribally important Medicine Pipe Bundles is widely noted. She has advised my husband and me during our two terms as Medicine Pipe Bundle keepers, and she helped to lead the ceremonies that these bundles have required us to host. In addition to recording many stories that she has told me, I have also obtained some related comments from her sister, Annie Red Crow.

538 There are many women among my people whom I consider wise and good storytellers. I wish some of the younger people would follow my example and record what their

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grandmothers and mothers have to say before they leave us forever. The collection of stories that I offer in this book comes from only a few of those women—ones to whom I am related or with whom I am good friends. Among these are Mrs. Annie Rides-at-the-Door, Rosie Davis, Annie Wadsworth, Grandma Mary Ground, and my aunt, Mary One Spot.

I studied background material for this book in many publications that exist about the Blackfoot tribes. Among these are works by James Willard Schultz, George Bird Grinnell, John Ewers, and Clark Wissler. I strengthened my collection of tribal legends by referring to a book of Blackfoot myths published in 1909 by the American Museum of Natural History. These were gathered by a half-breed Blackfoot named David Duvall. They are about the same as legends still told today, but in many cases more thorough.

I first recorded some of the stories in this book while helping my husband compile his book *The Blood People*, published by Harper & Row. Judging from his experiences with that book, I expect many pleasant responses and a few critical ones, some for no other reason than that "these stories should have been left for the old people to take with them." To this I can only say that each of the women who helped me felt that a book like this could only benefit the younger generations of our people, who need to understand their ancestral ways to appreciate them. This book should also give those who are not of our tribe a better chance to respect and admire the ways followed by my grandmothers.

The photographs in this book have been gathered over many years, and from many sources. Among these were family albums, secondhand and antique stores, the National Museum of Canada, and the Glenbow-Alberta Foundation, to whom credit and payment have been given.

I would like to thank the Canada Council, whose explorations grant funded one season of work with my grandmothers.

Learning to Camp Like My Grandmothers

THE WAY MY PEOPLE camp at the annual Sun Dance gathering sure has changed since the time my mother was a young girl staying with her grandparents. For instance, I don't know of anyone who still uses an open fire to cook all the meals on. And no one moves to the campgrounds with horses and wagons anymore: everyone brings their gear by truck, and a few even bring along travel trailers to stay in. There are lots of bright, orange-and-yellow camping tents, and many people use propane stoves.

When my husband and I first started camping at the Sun Dance we wanted to do it in a very traditional way. My mother helped me to sew a new tipi, and my grandmother told us to paint it in one of the two designs that she and my grandfather owned, many years ago. These tipi designs among the Blackfoot are very ancient; they get handed down from one family to the next. The tipi itself may wear out and be changed many times, but the design always looks the same. It goes together with special songs, stories, and face paintings, and a family has to be initiated before they have the right to use these things. There is even supposed to be a medicine bundle to go along with each tipi design, but most of

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Myths and Legends of My Grandmothers

538 773 ONE OF MY FAVORITE childhood memories is sitting by my grandmothers and hearing them tell us kids the many different myths and legends that have been handed down from my ancestors. Just like the fairy tales of other peoples, our legends let childhood imaginations do the impossible. However, many of these legends gave as much entertainment to the adults as to the children. In fact, many were specifically adult legends, full of suggestive topics and tribal adventures. In keeping with our tribal traditions, I cannot tell these legends in a public place, such as this book.

538 773 562 Although wars and fighting are popular topics for primitive legends, the ones that I have learned have a lot of mystical adventures of women. Perhaps the telling of these was a form of release for my grandmothers, whose daily lives were usually less dramatic than those of the men. Many legends tell of women who married wild animals and had children by them, a topic which could have many more meanings for a life close to nature than we might understand in these modern times.

Many Blackfoot legends involve the origins of our complex sacred ceremonies, medicine bundles, and warrior societies. These stories are further evidence of the high social

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standing achieved by the women in my grandmothers' times. Women take part in most of these legendary religious origins, and they are the recipients of the most important religious rituals that are described. Although virtuousness is stressed in all aspects of our culture, it is interesting to note in these stories that most of the rituals are presented to women after they have had unusual relationships with mystical beings. Usually the rituals are given to the husbands or parents of the women by the mystical beings. This is in keeping with our tribal traditions, which allow a man to regain his honor for violating a wife or daughter by making generous presents to the husband or parents. However, the husband may refuse the presents and take, intsead, the life of the wife or lover, or both.

Another interesting fact about our tribal legends is that they account for the origins of many natural sights and phenomena that children would normally be curious about. In addition to specific origin stories for religious ceremonies and articles, and for such things as stars and constellations, we have the many legends of Napi, in which the origins for everything from the lands and mountains to sewing and tanning are brought out. Lacking the scientific knowledge of the modern world, my grandmothers settled for these legendary origins in any questioning. This kind of attitude might be called primitive by many today, but it worked just fine when the people were mainly concerned with living in harmony with nature, rather than with pursuing scientific theories. In other words, whatever my grandmothers couldn't explain to their children from actual knowledge they explained by the telling of a myth or an ancient legend.

The legends given in this book are only a small sampling of the many that existed. Each storyteller gave a slightly different version, depending on how it had first been told to her or him. Storytelling was a favorite pastime in the old days, and every interesting incident was told and retold. Even in my

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538 own lifetime I have watched such incidents turn into legends. I can only imagine how the colorful life of the past must have inspired those who sat before the evening campfires with eager audiences waiting to be entertained.

HOW THE OLD PEOPLE SAY WE WOMEN WERE MADE

539 The way I have heard our ancestral stories told, the first woman was made as a companion for the first man. The Creator took a piece of buffalo bone and some sinew, then he covered them with mud and shaped them. When the Creator blew on the body it came to life. He did the same with the woman, and he taught them both how to make more of their own kind. While this was going on a wolf came along and offered to help out. He blew on the woman and at the same time he made a wolf howl, and the old people say that is why women have higher voices than men.

This first man and woman are said to have lived together happily for quite some time. They had two children, both boys. Every day the man went out hunting and the woman gathered firewood and hauled the water. But one day the man came home earlier than usual and he found that his wife was still not at home. He became suspicious, and he told the boys to be prepared for trouble.

The next morning the husband told his wife that he was going hunting again, but instead he went up on a high ridge where he could look down and keep watch on his camp. Soon he saw his wife going for wood, and then for water. Just before she got to the river the husband saw a large snake crawl behind a rock and change into a handsome man. Then he knew what was going on, so he rushed back to camp to tell his children. He gave them four magic articles that had great

LEGENDS OF NAPI

Our second evening of the encampment at the Belly Buttes was beginning. We were in a mood to hear some old-time stories, so we decided to visit Mokakin and see if we could inspire him to tell us some. It is a tradition among our People that myths and legends should be told only at nighttime. It is said that early blindness comes to those who disobey this custom.

Stories of war and adventure have always been popular among our People, especially the men. Women and children, too, have their favorites. But the most well liked of all are the stories of our legendary Napi, or Old Man, whose mythical experiences are exciting and occasionally gruesome. Some of the most popular of them are obscene.

The word *Napi* is used in a number of ways in the Blackfoot language. It can mean "friend," if the *a* is pronounced "ah" and the *i* is drawn out properly. A common greeting among acquaintances, for instance, is, "*Oki, Napih.*" It may also be used to greet an old man, if the word is pronounced with a longer "ah" and a very short *i*. This generally refers to a very old man. A man just old would be more commonly called *Omach-Kinna*, which means something like "big-aged man." Napi is pronounced with a short *i* when it is used to refer to the Old Man of legend. Finally, many of our People refer to our holy Sun as Napi, or Old Man, in their prayers. Because of this and the stories about Napi creating our part of the world, many observers have written that our People thought of Napi as God and prayed to him. Long, long ago, it is likely that our People believed that in the Sun was the spirit of an Old Man, to whom they gave thanks for the beginning of Earth. But the Napi of our myths and legends is a humorous prankster and trouble-maker. He is not the Napi referred to in our prayers.

[p. 51-A]

So we went to call on Mokakin next door. He was resting and Ponah was nearby visiting her sister, Mrs. Red Crow. He asked SikskiAki to pour some tea for us all from the kettle by the fire. 124

To start the conversation Mokakin said, "*Ah, Tsanitappi?*" He meant, "Yes, well, how are things going?" "*EkSokahpi,*" we replied, "Very good." I asked him if he could tell us any Napi stories. He told us, "Oh, I know lots of them. My grandmother taught them to me. My uncle, Eagle Ribs, he used to be real good at them—everybody knows him for that. That white man—we call him Long-Nosed Crow [Wilson]—he used to write them down when my uncle went to his store to tell him some. . . . Oh, I wish I could read good—I would have kept those stories and I could tell them to you just like my uncle did."

He didn't know that I had copies of those stories in a trunk at our tipi next door. I got them from the Glenbow Archives in Calgary. They had hired Philip H. Godsell in 1958 to edit Wilson's papers and combine them into a typewritten volume. When I told Mokakin about this he was anxious to have me read them. 127 124

I went to our tipi for the papers with Eagle Ribs's stories. As I read them to Mokakin he made a number of additions and variations. Our traditional stories always vary according to the person telling them. So, as I read each story to Mokakin, he made remarks here and there, in effect telling me his version of the same story. Therefore, I will now pass on to you the stories of old Eagle Ribs, as recorded by Wilson and, in a way, edited by the present Eagle Ribs (Mokakin). 124 [538]

□

NAPI TEACHES THE PEOPLE TO USE BUFFALO

It used to be that buffalo ate People. Napi found the People hiding in the mountains, where the buffalo could not find them. He told the People: "This is not right. You were meant to hunt the 539 773

[p. 51-B]

On his way he came across a nest of young night hawks. "Where are your parents?" he asked them. "They are getting food for us," was the reply. Now he knew that these were the children of the two night hawks that had just saved his life. His ornery mood returned to him and he shouted at the young birds, "Your parents have just annoyed me greatly. They had no business spoiling my fun out on the prairie. No one asked them to break that stone apart." And with that he took the young birds and put his fingers in each one's mouth and stretched them wide. Then he took a stone and pounded their long beaks until they were quite crooked, and he said, "This is how your kind will look from now on." And that is why night hawks have large mouths and crooked beaks.

When the old night hawks returned and discovered what had happened to their children, they immediately flew off after Napi. Napi saw them coming and tried to run from them, but they caught up to him and began throwing stones at his robe. The night hawks told Napi, "You will not be bothered by your robe anymore after we are through with you." Each time they threw a stone, a piece broke off Napi's robe, until the last piece was knocked from his hand. As Napi ran, he turned his head to see if the night hawks were still coming after him. At that moment the birds each threw their last stone, which hit him directly in the mouth, knocking out all his teeth. The night hawks then returned to their nest, satisfied that they had revenged Napi's evil treatment. At Rocky Creek, near Calgary, you can still see the pieces of the big stone, lying in a row as they broke off.

□

Ponah returned to her tipi while we were listening to Mokakin's last story of the night. Between stories, she had mentioned that her "old man" had often told Napi stories at home when she was still a child. She remembered sitting around the wood stove during winter blizzards,

fascinated by Napi's escapades. With a shy smile she added, "Now I know some of those stories that my dad never told me." She was referring to the ribald Napi adventures that were left out of the series when children were around. Wilson recorded his own versions of these naughty Napi stories that I later discovered had been "censored" when I heard the original, adult versions from our Old People.

Ponah told us that her dad's name was Iron, but that he was also called Center Speaker. He died not many years ago at the age of ninety-six. His father was the famous Ki-soum, or "Sun"—the same man Wilson called Moon. Ki-soum was a holy man, a doctor, and a minor chief as head of the Fish Eaters band. The confusion over his name can be explained this way: Although the common word for Sun in Blackfoot is *Natosi*, an older, seldom-used word is *Ki-soum*; and the word for Moon is *Gho-Ghomae-Ki-Soum*, or "Night Sun."

Iron is famous among our People for having been Keeper of more sacred Medicines than anyone else. Bundles of all kinds were transferred to him, and he, in turn, transferred them to others. I asked Ponah which of the sacred Bundles he was best at leading ceremonies for. She said, "Oh no, my dad didn't lead any ceremonies. He was too stingy. He always said, 'My prayers help me. I want to keep them for myself. I don't want to give them away.' That's why he never led ceremonies for other people." Iron's attitude about his prayers was somewhat unusual. He was long known for this philosophy. When his father, Ki-soum, died in 1898, Iron was the likely successor as chief of the Fish Eaters. However, the People of that band chose Eagle Bear instead. Eagle Bear was the husband of Otter Woman, Iron's sister.

One of Iron's brothers took his father's name, Ki-soum. He was a Weather Dancer during Medicine Lodge ceremonies. Another brother of Iron, Wolf Shirt, was famous for having great Power with our Medicine Pipes. Many Old

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

Visits with Some People from the Past

In the Old Days, our People stirred each other's imagination by telling stories of adventure, which they passed on from generation to generation. Most of these stories, originally actual experiences, were never written down and were lost with the Old Ways. In addition, there gradually came a time when the People no longer needed adventure stories, when there was less and less danger from enemies, less and less anxiety about gathering food.

The stories that follow come from the minds and memories of our Old People and their progeny, from an occasional written account, or, as is the case with the one you are about to read, from an unusual, personal venture into the world of the past.

A WARRIOR'S WALK

There is still a "warrior" Spirit within me that makes my heart beat faster when I close my eyes and imagine myself sneaking up to a far-away lodge, ready to get away with the fine horse tied in front of it. Most of our men born around 1900 or before had at least one horse-raiding experience during their youth, even though the war days were over and horse raiding was a thing of the past. Cree horse herds continued to be popular

[p.226-A]

26: Wessel H-4,5 (no date) 1982
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alienation felt by many of his generation who had neither a commitment to the old ways nor a firm perception of the future. Neither full blood by birth nor mixed blood by temperament, he strove to be both (Anonymous, 1902:1570; Stout, 1921: 1206; NA, 1915c). 159

Raised in the household of a White Indian-trader and educated at Carlisle Indian School where he graduated in 1896, Hamilton doubtless was confused about his own ethnic heritage. Consequently, in finding his place on the Blackfoot Reservation at the turn of the century he appealed to emotion rather than biology. The conflict in his own background propelled him to seek identification in the political arena rather than in a society still clinging to a way of life that could not survive.

Returning to the reservation after his graduation, Hamilton began a conventional career for a young man with a prominent local sponsor. He married a full blood Blackfoot girl in 1898 and took a job as a clerk in the store of another trader, E.T. Broadwater. While working in the Broadwater store he also acted as an interpreter for the reservation agent. That experience may have first turned him to political activism. Certainly for the first time it brought him into close contact with his people and gave him a unique vantage point from which to observe the nearly complete control that reservation agents then exercised. Hamilton also discovered that he enjoyed being at the center of power.

Hamilton's tenure as tribal interpreter was short-lived. He used his position to convince the agent of the need for a building to house a Blackfoot literary society where young men of his age could learn English and read American literature. Agent Thomas Fuller applauded the idea and soon gave his permission, only to learn that the building was a gathering place for training young men in the Sun Dance and for older men to pass down oral traditions. Hamilton had not been entirely deceitful. He intended to combine instruction in English with the preservation of Blackfoot traditions, which he wished to learn himself. He also used the occasion to rally support against an appointed tribal council. In any event, 159 575 538 191 159 575 668 159

[p. 62-B]

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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"OLD MAN" AND THE FATHER IMAGE IN BLOOD (BLACKFOOT) SOCIETY

By ESTHER S. GOLDFRANK (New York)

Myths have long been considered useful instruments for understanding the material culture and social organization of the society from which they have been obtained and to which they refer. More recently emphasis has been placed on their value in studies of attitude and personality.[1] In both cases certain limitations are immediately apparent. The personality of the narrator as well as the political, economic, educational, religious, and aesthetic aims of the community will determine what is said and what is left unsaid. In speaking of the variations in Blackfoot mythology, Wissler, whose work on this tribe is outstandingly comprehensive, writes:

"This variable condition may be interpreted as a breaking-down of Blackfoot mythology, but there is another factor to be considered. Myths are told by a few individuals, who take pride in their ability and knowledge, and usually impress their own individuality upon the form of the narrative. Thus it seems equally probable that the various versions represent individual contributions, and, in a certain sense, are the ownership-marks of the narrators."[2]

In Hopi emergence myths, the political affinities and status of the storyteller had a notable effect on the form and fancy of his tale[3]—in fact, one informant used thematic material in entirely different ways at different times.[4] Moreover, certain very significant aspects of a culture may be stressed lightly or not at all. Aridity is a basic motive in Pueblo mythology, but irrigation, the agricultural technique without which

[1] Many names come to mind in this connection. To mention a few: Victor Barnouw, Ruth Benedict, George Devereux, A. I. Hallowell, William Morgan, Morris Opler among the anthropologists; Erich Fromm, Abram Kardiner, Harry B. Lee, Warner Muensterberger, Géza Róheim among the psychoanalysts.

[2] Clark Wissler, and D. C. Duvall, "Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, II: 5, 1908.

[3] Esther S. Goldfrank, "The Impact of Situation and Personality on Four Hopi Emergence Myths," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, IV, 1948, *passim*.

[4] *Op. cit.*, pp. 245 ff.; also *idem*, "Isleta Variants: A Study in Flexibility," *J. Am. Folklore*, XXXIX, 1926, *passim*.

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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few crops would prosper in that water-deficient region, is mentioned rarely and then briefly.[5]

Time raises equally important problems. Ancient customs may be remembered in myth long after they have vanished from the scene entirely or are operative only on special and usually ceremonial occasions. The buffalo hunt still has a central role in Blackfoot mythology, although the buffalo disappeared by 1880. The emphasis on the bow and arrow is similarly out of focus. On the other hand, new elements may be introduced (the horse in Navaho legend); or again, and this is more frequent, they may not. Blackfoot tales tell nothing of the wheat farming which became a substantial feature of Blackfoot economy in the early 1900's or of the frame houses that replaced the skin "lodges" years before.

Such irregularities should not discourage us from utilizing mythological texts, but they should warn against a simplistic interpretation of social life and personality structure in a given community over a long period of time. Necessarily, any feature indicated in a myth, whether a material object, institution, attitude, or relationship has reality. But it may be entirely incorrect to conclude from this that these different features carry the same weight in the actual situation as they do in the myth. The stories of Old Man, an important source of information for any study of Blood attitudes toward the father or father substitute, while extremely suggestive, would not provide a safe basis for predicting which attitude was given the greatest emphasis today—at least not on the overt level. Only a knowledge of Blood society as a whole and over time enables us to evaluate the single features properly.

The Blackfoot stories about Old Man (*napiw*[s]) are of two kinds. One cycle reveals him as creator and giver, a beneficent being who makes the earth and all that lives on it, provides a language for the people, teaches the skills of hunting and warfare and the ways of marriage.[6] The second is very different both in substance and conception. It discloses Old Man as a malevolent being, a trickster who stops at nothing. He does not hesitate to retrieve a robe given earlier as a gift.[7] He steals leggings from a stranger who offers him a night's lodging. He gouges out coyote's eyes. He roasts squirrels to death in hot ashes. He thrusts his oversized penis (lariot) through the ground until it "raises" and kills a

[5] Karl A. Wittfogel and Esther S. Goldfrank, "Some Aspects of Pueblo Mythology and Society," *J. of Am. Folklore*, LVI: 23, 1943.

[6] John Maclean, *Canadian Savage Folk*, Toronto, 1896, pp. 51 ff.; see also *idem*, "Blackfoot Mythology," *J. Am. Folklore*, VI: 165, 1893.

[7] Except where otherwise indicated, the themes cited appear in Clark Wissler and D. C. Duvall, *op. cit.*

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

girl picking strawberries. He decapitates babies left alone momentarily, placing their heads in their cradles and their bodies in a pot to boil.

Repulsive as these crimes are, Old Man frequently "gets away with it." But frequently too he is fooled and punished. He may be beaten in a race by coyote, who, simulating lameness at the start, later outruns him and makes off with his meat. He may lose the medicine leggings he has stolen. He may be double-crossed by women feigning death. He may be defecated on because he split open the mouths of young nighthawks. He may lose his eyes because he failed to heed a warning. He may be rejected in marriage and become a pine tree.

Such vulnerability makes it clear that Old Man is no "perfect" godhead—today even in the creation myths he is forced to give in to Old Woman, who, though expected to have only "second say," seems, in many important instances, to make the final decisions.[8] On the other hand, the harm Old Man endures is, in most cases, considerably lighter than the suffering he inflicts. Mclean, writing in 1896, held that Old Man was not the "Great Spirit," but a secondary creator.[9] Whether or not he was the primary, and as such, a "perfect" divinity in the original Blackfoot creation myth—and Wissler believes "that the Blackfoot formerly had a well-defined creation myth, in which the Old Man took the initiative in producing and transforming the world"[10]—his identification, now and for decades,[11] with the shabby and amoral trickster certainly puts him closer to man than to God. And the Blood leave no doubt as to the completeness of this identification: in the same tale, Old Man appears both as trickster and creator.[12]

A comparison of Blackfoot myths—the earliest to be mentioned ap-

[8] *Op. cit.*, pp. 19 ff. Old Woman, contrary to Old Man's decision, insists that tanning the hides (woman's work) must be made very difficult "so that the good workers may be found out." Again, contrary to Old Man, she insists that, while people will have eyes and mouths in their faces, these "shall all be set crosswise" and "not straight up and down." Similarly, she insists that "there shall be four fingers and one thumb on each hand," and not, as Old Man suggested, "ten fingers on each hand." And when Old Man says, "The genitals shall be at our navels," Old Woman answers, "No, that will make childbearing too easy; the people will not care for their children. The genitals shall be at the pubes." And it is Old Woman who decides by the throw of her rock that "it is better for people to die forever; for if they did not die forever, they would never feel sorry for each other, and there would be no sympathy in the world." But Old Man does get the last word: When Old Woman's daughter dies, she regrets her earlier decision. "Let us have our say over again," she pleads. But this time Old Man is adamant. "No," he answers, "we fixed it once."

[9] John Maclean, *Canadian Savage Folk*, p. 52; see also Clark Wissler and D. C. Duvall, "Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians," pp. 23 ff.

[10] *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

[11] *Loc. cit.*

[12] John Maclean, "Blackfoot Mythology," p. 166.

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

A comparison of Blackfoot myths--the earliest to be mentioned appears in Henry and Thompson's journal[13]—indicates a gradual deterioration in the creation myth,[14] a merging of its culture hero (perhaps originally the "Great Spirit" or the Sun)[15] with the far from admirable "trickster," whose pranks, rather than the wisdom and generosity of the Creator, receive the attention of the Blackfoot narrator today.

It seems legitimate to see in this "secondary creator"—one who is less than perfectly divine and more than ordinarily human—a projection of the Blackfoot father image. Manifestly, the Old Man stories underline conflicting attitudes that reveal a fundamental ambivalence toward the father.[16] But neither the fact that the obscene and antisocial variants are recited almost exclusively,[17] nor that "Old Man" is a synonym for immorality,[18] nor that the thought of praying to him provokes merriment,[19] would indicate whether the more frequent emphasis of the tales directly or invertedly reflects expressed opinion. For an answer we must examine, as suggested above, certain aspects and aims of Blackfoot, or more specifically Blood society, both now and in the past.[20]

In 1877, the Blood were confined to a Reservation in Alberta, Canada. In 1878, a Blood winter count reads, "This was the year the

[13] Alexander Henry and David Thompson, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest, The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson*, edited by Elliott Coues, New York, 1897, p. 528.

[14] Clark Wissler and D. C. Duvall, "Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians," p. 9.

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 10 ff. Here Wissler suggests that a possible confusion between the Sun (*natos*) and Old Man (*napiwa*) has resulted in the identification of the heroes of the two tale cycles. He notes "that the earlier writers are disposed to treat *Natos*, the Sun, as the home of the Old Man, while the later ones make each a character." Whatever the phonetic similarities in these two names, it is difficult to see this as a plausible reason for the identification of the trickster and creator. For a discussion of some of the general points involved, see David Bidney, "The Concept of Myth and the Problem of Psychocultural Evolution," *Am. Anthropologist*, LII, 1950.

[16] The Freudian school of psychoanalysis stresses that such ambivalence is generated by the oedipal situation. See particularly Géza Róheim, *Psychoanalysis and Anthropology*, New York: Int. Univ. Press, 1950.

[17] Clark Wissler and D. C. Duvall, "Mythology of the Blackfoot Indians," p. 9.

[18] *Loc. cit.*

[19] *Loc. cit.*

[20] It has not seemed necessary to document the numerous statements on institutions and history made in the following pages. For general background material, see Esther S. Goldfrank, "Changing Configurations in the Social Organization of a Blackfoot Tribe during the Reserve Period," *Monographs of the American Ethnological Society*, VIII, New York, 1945; L. M. Hanks, Jr. and Jane Richardson, "Observations on Northern Blackfoot Kinship," *Monographs of the American Ethnological Society*, IX, New York, 1945; Oscar Lewis, "The Effect of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture," *Monographs of the American Ethnological Society*, VI, New York, 1942; Clark Wissler, "The Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians," *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, VII, New York, 1911. The data on favoritism are taken essentially from notes made by me in 1939 on the Blood Reservation.

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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families these relationships were taken very seriously. In all, no matter how limited the material benefits, they gave an added security to children whose sense of belonging was often shaken.

But such extensions did not alter the traditional basis of favoritism. It was the father who, almost always established a *minipoka*, and it was the father who remained the symbol of the "giver." To say, "He was like a father to me," not only implied that the individual referred to had something to offer, but that the speaker had benefited from his generosity and love. That a "true" *minipoka* might see his father as "giver" is quite understandable. But others who had enjoyed little, if any, of the favorite's privileges built a similar image. Unpleasant treatment at the hands of a father or father substitute (frequently an older brother-in-law) was recalled with little display of hostility or repressed altogether.

A man whose father had "walked out on the family" would tell with obvious pleasure of the latter's kindness to him during a short visit years afterwards; or, a man who was "raised" by his grandmother and shunted about from place to place, would say of the various heads of the households he had stayed in, "They all treated me like a son," although none of them, not even those who had "special power," conspicuously demonstrated their affection for him; or a man who had donned women's clothes and attempted suicide because his *minipoka* brother-in-law was the accepted family head, would speak most enthusiastically of the latter's "goodness" to him.

Thus it is clear that as more wealth accumulated—and this holds for the nonnative as well as for the native forms—a son's status, privilege and prestige was tied more and more to his father's; and more and more, a son felt impelled to insist that his father was outstandingly good and generous. For the *minipoka* the gap between fact and profession may not have been too great. For those who wanted to keep up with the Joneses—the less privileged and the little-privileged, and these were the overwhelming majority—it must have been wide indeed. Under these circumstances, the trickster tales undoubtedly fulfilled an important function: in a society where the institutions encouraged an idealization of the father, they offered a vigorous and uncensored release for the son's repressed feelings of aggression.

So interpreted, the differently weighted father images evoked in Blood mythology and in daily living generally become understandable. Equally understandable is the increased popularity of the trickster tales.

35: Michelson E,L-5 (1910) 1916 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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he was crying, "I was longing to do the way you were doing." So the Wolf told him, "My brother, it is an easy matter." Old-Man had a long tail too. And the Wolf told him, "You tie a rock to your tail too. You can do it; but do not do it more than four times a day." So Old-Man started off. When he got around the bend, he picked up a rock and tied it to his tail. And he started off singing, "Now the ice should crack." Then the ice began to crack, and the fat began to come out. Then of course he started off. Every now and then he would do the same thing over again. Then, after the fourth time, he said, "I am going to do that the fifth time to see what will happen." Then the rock broke through and fell into the water. The night was so cold that it froze up on him, and he could not pull his tail out; and he lost his tail, and became bob-tailed. And he said, "I see! The rising generation are going to all become bob-tailed." That is the reason we do not have long tails now.

TRUMAN MICHELSON.

PIEGAN TALES OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN. — From some recent work with the Piegans, it appears that they have incorporated a fairly large body of European tales in their folk-lore. However, they are fully conscious of the fact that these tales are European in origin. It is of the highest importance that they claim that some of these are old, and some only recently acquired. A few are not specified as regards age. Tales which are said to be old are "Seven-Heads," "Rabbit runs a Race with Turtle," and "Big Fool and Little Fool." Tales only recently acquired are "Cinderella," "Blue-Beard," and "Jack and the Beanstalk." Tales whose dates are not stated are "Joseph and Jacob: How his Brothers sold him to the Egyptians, the Seven Fat Cows, the Seven Lean Cows, and the Four Ears of Corn;" the interminable adventures of "Little-John" and "Anthony."[1]

TRUMAN MICHELSON.

THE HAWAIIAN HULA-DANCE. — In the death in August, 1915, of Nathaniel B. Emerson, M.D., the territory of Hawaii loses one more of that older generation of native-born foreigners who knew from childhood the language and the people of old Hawaii, and interested themselves in its ancient lore. Dr. Emerson was a constant student of Hawaiian folk-lore. In 1898 he translated the "Hawaiian Antiquities" collected by David Malo in the thirties; his translation of the myth of the volcano goddess, Pele, and her sister Hiiaka, appeared just before his death; and in 1909 a study of the Hawaiian *hula*-dance was published as Bulletin 38 by the Bureau of American Ethnology in Washington. The *hula*, in its ancient and classical form, is analogous to the Japanese *Noh* dances and to other like institutions throughout the South Sea Islands. It was conventionalized into a real school of dramatic art. The object of this note is briefly to outline the facts collected by Dr. Emerson from the old Hawaiians about these ceremonial dances, as the practice and tradition have survived into modern time.

A *hula* performance consisted in a series of dramatic dances accompanied by song, sometimes by rhythmical instruments. It was given under the

[1] The informant had forgotten the names of these last two. I have supplied them, as the tales correspond extremely closely to the Fox stories of Pitcîc'a (= Petit-Jean) and Ātwān (= Antoine) (see American Anthropologist, N.S., vol. xv, p. 699).

44: Holterman U-3 (no date) 1970
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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Montana

Seven Blackfeet Stories

by Jack Holterman

HERE are a few stories told by the Blackfeet or Piegan Indians of Montana, whose reservation borders on Glacier National Park. They illustrate several trends in Blackfeet story-telling: the simple, stark beauty of the tale; the pointed moral; the peculiar sense of cause and effect, so different from that of the European culture. I have tried to tell these stories in the simple style that the story-teller himself would use, reserving my personal comments for this little introduction. Many, many Blackfeet stories have been told in print before, so I have tried to select stories which have never before been published or at least versions which differ from the published forms. There are, after all, almost as many versions of the stories as there are story-tellers. My selection also samples tales from various categories: the star story, the war-trail story, the Napi story, the joke, the precept. My principal story-tellers were Sam New Breast and Tom Medicine Bull. Occasionally, when the tale was told, the informant would cock his eye at me like a robin does spotting a worm, and ask me something like: "Do you believe it?" "Can a man really go to the sun?"

"The Woman of Stone" is a story that the Blackfeet believe they received from the Sioux. Obviously, these tales are passed from tribe to tribe and probably from continent to continent. "The Pleiades" is a typical star story with the usual "That's why . . ." of mythology everywhere. "The Frog and the Rain" was told to me by the late Jack Starkweather, years ago when we were fellow students at Stanford. He was a graduate then in anthropology.

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There are countless Napi stories still in circulation. These vary greatly among themselves from the didactic to the "pornographic." Generally, they deal with the nitty-gritty side of life, not the lyric nor the romantic. Thus they reflect the many-faceted nature of Napi himself. He is the old Algonquin god, and appears as creator, trickster, thief, scoundrel, libertine, wise man, judge, nit-wit and the brunt of jokes. He is a culture hero and messianic figure of the Algonquin peoples. His Blackfeet name *Napi* means both "old" and "white," and usually with the suffix -koan (person) the word is applied to the white man. Thus he reminds of the Mexican Quetzalcoatl and may have the same origin. Such a figure crops up in myths from all over the Americas. Curiously enough, modern Blackfeet frequently call him redundantly "Old Napi" as if they had forgotten the true meaning of his Algonquin name. This particular Napi story, however, also introduces the Coyote, who is not always portrayed as companion of Old Man, but who fills much the same role of creator, trickster, culture hero in the mythology of California, the Southwest, the Northwest Plateau. This element may therefore be a non-Algonquin accretion to the tale. But it lends the story a tone of pure poetry, making Old Man into a typical witch or shaman figure accompanied by his animal "alter ego." 538 538 773 [171]

"The Ghost Wife" is of course a Blackfeet version of a legend that is found around the world. To the ancient Greeks, this was the story of Orpheus and Euridyce. Yet the Blackfeet version is peculiarly low-key. Its matter-of-fact tone deprives it of some of the warmth and color we might hope for and which we may find in the Chippewa version. Perhaps the Blackfeet story has been too long neglected. When Sam New Breast told it to me, he delivered it as a dialogue in the manner of a play with two characters: Ninau (the man or chief) and Sikapiohkitupi (the Pale Rider). I have not attempted to imitate this style in my rendering, but I think it is significant that such a modern technique should also be so traditional. 538 171 538

"The Half-Man" is quite a different type of story, evidently the record of an actual event. It's a perfect little horror, but it has a kind of simple majesty and its element of cause and effect satisfies the conventional European thinking much more, say, than that of "The Woman of Stone."

"Scarface" is an ancient Blackfeet classic and is so regarded by the people, who treat it with much more respect than some of their other tales, a Napi story, for example. It has often been told in books and even in opera. Yet it has so many versions that I do not feel ashamed to tell it again, in a version that is different. Here, instead of the common romantic happy ending, we have an ironic twist that 538 128

is a piece of genuine Blackfeet realism. At the same time I have tried to preserve the lyricism that seems an inherent part of the story. I have stressed the magical role of the number four and have omitted the interesting episode in which Scarface saves Morning Star from the attack of the vicious cranes. I omitted it because most of my informants did. Whether the story has any connection with the poetic "Going to the Sun" in Glacier National Park seems impossible to determine nowadays, but it remains a fascinating possibility. From Pablo Gonzalez Casanova's essay, I get the impression that the myth may contain elements from Siberia, specifically in its treatment of birds. Yet "Scarface" is not only a bird story; it is also a star story. Morning Star (Ipisoahs) is the planet Venus, whereas Scarface (also called False Morning Star or Pahtsipisoahs) is Jupiter. The myth seems to be a reference to their conjunction as morning stars. Walter McClintock considers Scarface a Christ-figure. He couples the Scarface myth with the other well-known story of "Thw Woman Who Married a Star." So did my informant, by the way, but in quite a different fashion. In the version given by Walter McClintock, the girl, Soatsaki (Feather Woman) wishes to marry Morning Star and is taken up by him into the sky. There she digs up a turnip, looks down through the hole to earth and becomes so homesick that Morning Star sends her home again. She becomes the mother of Scarface (not the sweetheart) whereas Morning Star thus becomes his father (not his friend). This story, in part, was also given to me, but as a thing separate from the legend of Scarface.

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C. C. Uhlenbeck and his co-workers printed the myth of Scarface and a number of other Blackfeet stories in the Blackfeet language with detailed translations. When he came here from Holland, so the local story goes, he was snubbed by the BIA and camped out at the Holy Family Mission on Two Medicine River, where he began to make friends with the "Mission kids." His work turned out to be a scientific masterpiece. He was a scholar of the Basque language, and it may be that he hoped to find a clue in America of similarities between Basque and American Indian languages. A Spanish Jesuit, stationed here about this same time, may have been of help to him on both Basque and Blackfeet. However, I don't know if he ever found his clues or whatever he most wanted. But he would perhaps have been delighted to read the recent classification by Maurice Swadesh of Basque and Nadene (along with Chinese etc.) in the same great phylum. And in his own time (1910-1911) he discovered his own bright insights into the Blackfeet mind and myth,

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54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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self in the lodge and picked up the red-hot stones and began to use them for guess bones in the hand game. By the time he had picked up the second stone, the boy opened his eyes, and by the time he had picked up the fourth stone, the boy was cured. 539 755.

Flat Tail had stolen two horses from the Crows, and one of them he gave to Morning Eagle for having cured his son.

The story of Calf Robe and the Medicine Coyote is especially interesting because it was told to the Chief by his father, Onistáipokah, who was a member of the war party involved in the story. The most intriguing aspect of the tale is found in the fact that during the first part of the action, while Onistáipokah was actually present, we have a recitation of perfectly logical and verifiable historical occurrence, whereas during the latter portion of the story, during which Onistáipokah was not actually attendant upon the action, we find to enter an aspect of mystical experience which is, to say the least, remarkable. 538

CALF ROBE AND THE MEDICINE COYOTE

A large party of Piegans was organized to make a raid against the Crows. The first section of the war party consisted of seven men under the leadership of Ómaksapope [Big Plume]. Big Plume took his wife along with him. [Not an unusual occurrence, especially if the wife were childless.] 539 72

Ten days later, a much larger party under Áchkutaumachkan [Double Runner] and his father, Nínnaipeeksee [Chief Prairie Chicken], set out to overtake Big Plume. But they did not know that Big Plume had taken his wife with him and when they came upon a camp at which a woman was scraping a hide, they were not sure whether it was the camp of some enemies. All day long they watched the camp, but they could not recognize anybody. [Contrary to what some writers of fiction would have us believe, it was not always possible—even for other Indians—to know from a distance exactly what tribe an encampment or a group of riders belonged to. There was so much cultural borrowing among the various Plains Tribes, so much copying of enemy hair-do's and wearing of captured enemy clothing, using of captured weapons, horse gear, etc., that inadvertent skirmishes between groups from the same tribe were not uncommon.] At night some of the men of Double [177]

539 stay put, and so the riders passed and the three friends were saved.

The patch of brush in which Calf Robe and the bear and the coyote were hiding was not far from Akáhpyoyist [Many Houses: Fort Benton]. There was a Piegan camp nearby, and Calf Robe made it safely to the camp. That night, the people in the camp could hear the coyote and the bear howling, but Calf Robe told them not to harm the animals but to take them food because they had saved his life. So the people of the camp took food to the bear and the coyote.

The bear and the coyote stayed in the patch of brush for quite some time. Then finally one day the bear left, and pretty soon after that the coyote left too.

The young people of the tribe do not know this story, but the old-timers know it. Old Chewing Black Bones knows this story, and if you ask him he will tell you that it is a true story.

538 122 I had become so engrossed in the linguistic aspect of these stories that it was not until the story-telling was completed and we were all enjoying a hot drink that I paused to give full thought to the philosophical side of the narratives. "Do you really believe everything in these stories?" I asked Jim, and Jim really caught me with [829] my cassock down by suggesting, with polite obliqueness, the phenomenal character of a prominent Christian dogma. "Well," he said, "I telling: my wife comes 'round tells me she's knock-up by a god, there's going be a big trouble in my house, I think."

122 *11:00:* Jimmy just came in with an armful of wood and said, "Goddam! It's a cold outside! Guess I got wear cap today." He asked me whether I had seen his hat, but he said it in Blackfoot and I didn't understand him at first because instead of using the word for hat (*ist-tsim-o-kahn*) with which I am familiar, he used "*o-toh-kahn-o-kós-toh-mok*," which refers specifically to a cap or hat which has a round shape. He was right about it's being "a cold outside," though; I know because a short while ago I borrowed the Chief's overshoes and went down for two buckets of water. The butane tank is empty, but there is a wood fire going in the kitchen and it is nice and warm in there and as soon as my water heats I am going to take a bath. The wind is really strong outside, blowing the snow almost horizontally.

Night: Well, I'm clean! While the Chief dictated a letter to Jim (for me to type up), I took a bucket bath—what my old Texas friend, Cap Fowler, calls a "possible" bath. Cap described the procedure as follows: "First you wash down as far as possible; then you wash up as far as possible; and then you wash possible."

After lunch the Chief wanted to go to town, but when he stepped out onto the porch and felt the power of that wind he changed his mind. So instead he seated himself in a chair and sang some of his [533] old war songs, accompanying himself by pounding on the floor with [538] his cane, and the war songs put him in a story-telling mood so I [126] turned on the recorder and the Chief expounded in detail the preparations which the Blackfoots made for going to war. He began 809 by remarking that the White Man has done a magnificent job of misinterpreting and misrepresenting the Plains Indian culture. As Jimmy interjected, "Always make Indians look like bunch damn [546] fools." This phase of discussion arose from the fact that the film, [522] *Chief Crazy Horse*, is coming to the local flick. Indian films, and [301] other comedies, are quite popular on the Reservation, and the older Blackfoot ladies are especially titillated by the fact that the movies always portray an Indian maiden wearing a beaded headband with 562 a feather sticking in it. The beaded headband is itself both con- 301 temporary and ersatz, and it was at one time considered indecent 237 of an Indian woman to adorn herself with feathers. The Sun Dance Holy Woman wore a small plume tied at one side of her head, and Blackfoot women frequently did (and still do) wear their husband's or boy friend's hats while the menfolk are dancing, but certainly no Plains Indian woman in the old days went around with an eagle feather sticking up behind her head.

721 Considering the relative lateness of his appearance upon the

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culture should have been retained by the isolated Blackfoots in a form more pure than that found among those Algonkins who remained in the East and were thus subjected to the cultural influence of other Indian groups and of course to that of the various European groups which colonized in that area. I am especially intrigued by the fact that even today some of the older Blackfoots, when crossing a body of water, will offer gifts to the spirits upon whose domain they are trespassing. Usually the offering to the Underwater Spirits is in the form of tobacco—a sack of Bull Durham or a cigarette—but this gesture certainly evokes thoughts of the ancient mariners (not only the Norsemen but the Ancient Greeks) pouring libations upon the waters in petition for a safe voyage. Even today, the Underwater Spirits are very real to those Blackfoots who cling to the old beliefs, and although some of the younger Blackfoots do not hesitate to trap the Beaver Persons and the Otter Persons, the old-timers still prefer to purchase their ceremonial water-animal skins from the barbaric Crees.

There is certainly a great deal of factual information with which to link Blackfoot culture to that of the ancient Norsemen (e.g., the Blackfoot sweat lodge is identical in appearance and function to the rustic Scandinavian sauna bath, and the Blackfoots switch themselves with a buffalo tail exactly as the Scandinavians smack themselves with birch branches), but our best clues as to the origin of the Blackfoots exist probably in Blackfoot legend. Tonight, after we had discussed the Underwater Persons, the Chief told me a richly interesting history of an event which had taken place "a long time ago" (when the Chief says a long time ago he means a *really* long time ago) when all the Blackfoots lived "far to the north." This legend may imply, among other things, the first breaking away of the Piegans from the main body of Blackfoots. The hero of the story is a man called Round Scabby Robe, who received his power from the Underwater Persons, the Beaver Persons. The word "Piegan"—which most writers transcribe from the Blackfoot as "Pekuni" or "Pecunnie" but which is correctly pronounced either [pikȁni] or [píkȁni] according to linguistic environment—means Scabby Robe.

WHY THE PIEGANS KILL THE SNAKE PERSONS

A long, long time ago, when all the Blackfoots lived far up in the North, they did not kill the Snake Persons [the Shoshoni Indians] or make war on them. Each year when the waters became warm [probably in July or early August], the chiefs

539 attempt to take the scalp from me, but I will fool them by em-
648 ploying the same trick which the Beaver Persons employ in fooling their enemies. Our people will be waiting down the river from the crossing where I will kill Big Top, and I will dive under the water headed downstream. But underwater I will turn and swim upstream instead, so you must wait for me upstream."

And that is the way it happened. Big Top charged the Blackfoot Chief, but Round Scabby Robe made his ceremony and rushed into the water to fight with Big Top. Big Top threw his lance, but it glanced harmlessly off the small stick that Round Scabby Robe was wearing across his chest, and then Round Scabby Robe killed Big Top with a flint knife and scalped him and divided the scalp with his partner.

That night the Blackfoots had a victory dance, and as Round Scabby Robe's sweetheart danced she carried the scalp of Big Top. She was very proud.

After the dance, Round Scabby Robe gave the scalp to the head chief and said, "I want your far-away wife to become my sits-by-him wife."

The head chief said, "You are a great warrior and someday you will be a great chief. I am proud to have you for a relative."

From that time on, the Blackfoots and the Snake Persons were enemies, and since that time they kill one another and take one another's scalps.

● 538 Since the English translation of the Blackfoot word for "Piegan" means "Scabby Robe," I assume that in Blackfoot legendry Round Scabby Robe is given credit for having established the Piegan Tribe of the Blackfoot Nation. No further mention was made by the Chief of the partner with whom Round Scabby Robe shared the scalp of Big Top, but it is possible that in Blackfoot legend he was first chief of the Bloods (who refer to themselves as the Many Chiefs, not the Bloods), the third major division of the Blackfoot Nation. If so, this portion of the narrative has been lost in the telling.

122 I was in a veritable rapture of fascination over receiving so much
538 priceless material from the Chief, and the Chief was obviously enjoying telling the stories, so I asked him if he would tell me some of his own warpath experiences. He appeared willing enough, and at last I learned the story of his first war parties.

The survey crew had gone, but they had left behind some bread. The bread was mouldy, but we were so hungry that we ate it anyway. 159 721

From there we followed the creek down to a place called Red Painted Rock, and from there to a Blackfoot campground known as Many Chief. We hid out our guns and staked out the horses and entered the camp. My grandmother, Holy Rags, and my aunt, John, were in the camp. Most of the people in the camp were women and girls; they were picking berries.

My grandmother had started to cook some food for us when a half-breed interpreter from the States came in and wanted to know what we were doing there. He said that the Mounties wanted to know. My grandmother knew that we had been on a war path, but she told the interpreter that we were some of her relatives visiting from another camp. The interpreter said that we had better leave right now--I think he was afraid we might raise hell in the camp, or else he was jealous of the girls there--but my Aunt John said that it was pretty late now and it would be better if we left early in the morning.

Early the next day some Mounties came through, and when they and the interpreter had crossed the stream on the ferry, we fellows took our guns and horses and went to where the old Blood Agency used to be. The Blackfoots called it Many Surrendered. The Agent at this time was called Big Bear. [657]

Once again we hid out our guns and horses, and went into the Agency. There were a few Blood camps in the area, but not many. We found out that most of the camps, including that of my uncle, Running Wolf, had moved down east. The Agent asked us where we were from, and we told him we were from one of the camps down east. He told us we had better go back home, so we went and got our guns and horses and went down to Running Wolf's camp. That is to say, Narrow Belt and I did. Running-With-Guns' people were camped near Many Surrendered, so we left him there.

So we got home safe with all our horses. I gave the best of my horses to my uncle, Running Wolf, and I also gave one to my sister, Weasel Tail Woman. I gave the others away too, but I can't remember who I gave them to--I think I gave them to my female cousins.

I felt that in these last stories the Chief had really warmed up to his task, but as I sat in confident expectation of learning even more 122 538●

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122 about the Chief's early life, I learned instead why it is that so many
538 ethnologists and anthropologists are a bit buggy.

THE TIME I CUT THE SUN DANCE POLE

159 The Chief's next story consisted of the following statement:
555

> At the time I was chosen to cut the centerpole for the Medicine Lodge at the Sun Dance [a very great honor, granted only to warriors of outstanding achievement] I recited the following war honors:
>
> I took the scalp of a Cree.
>
> I stole all the horses of Little Shield, a Gros Ventre, and brought them back to Canada. [Not to be confused with the Blackfoot war chief named Little Shield.]
>
> I shot a horse from under Night Eagle, a Chippewa chief.
>
> One of our men got left behind during a war party against the Crows, and I went back and saved his life.

The maddening aspect of this little narrative was that any one of these events, if told in detail, would undoubtedly be a much better story than the others the Chief told me tonight. But he did not elaborate upon these achievements, and I dared not ask him to.

538 The Chief, as always, was obviously more interested in reciting
[829] the old traditional Blackfoot tales than in telling of his personal ad-
[126] ventures; he is saddened by the fact that very few of today's Blackfoot youngsters display even the faintest interest in the old legends, and he wants me to record them so that they will not be lost to future generations. During the evening he remarked that the man who is "buying stories" around town is not getting anything for his money but a bunch of tall tales. I believe this, because the Chief and Chewing Black Bones, a Piegan nearly as old as the Chief, are the only ones left who really know the old stories. Old Chewing Black Bones is a bitter old warrior who has very little use for the White Man; he will speak with Father Mallman, with a young White man whom he has adopted as the Chief has adopted me, and with a few other Whites whom he has learned to trust, but for a strange White man to attempt to approach him would be entirely fruitless. And neither the Chief nor old Chewing can be bought.

[861] The Chief explained that he learned the old traditional and his-

torical Blackfoot tales as a youngster by having the old-timers recite them to him, over and over, until he knew every word (rather in the same manner that the Rig-Veda was passed from generation to generation in India, but of course lacking the formality which attended this linguistically important ritual of the ancient Brahmin religion). The Chief said that the old-timers had been very patient and generous but that sometimes they would tease him, and he illustrated the nature of this teasing by relating an actual incident. 538 861

THE BATTLE AT SIX PERSONS

A group of us youngsters were sitting around listening to some of the old-timers tell stories. There was Looking For Smoke, Big Spring, Morning Eagle and some others. Morning Eagle was telling us about the time that a Blackfoot war party was fighting against some Crows at a place called Six Persons. The Blackfoots were doing all right for themselves until they ran out of ammunition, at which time six of them got killed. Finally Morning Eagle said, "I see plenty of ammunition around here," and he began to point to various small sticks that were lying around the ground. Then he took from his pocket a piece of milkroot that was just about the size of a bullet, and placing the milkroot in his rifle he shot it as though it were a bullet and killed a Crow. Then all the rest of the Blackfoots placed sticks in their rifles and fired them, and pretty soon they had the Crows on the run. 159 726

When Morning Eagle finished his story, he took a black handkerchief from his pocket. He said, "This black handkerchief is my gunpowder. I think I will throw it into the stove and make the stove explode." When he said that, all of us youngsters became frightened and ran outside. Those old-timers sure did laugh at us. [522]

Inevitably during the evening the conversation would return to Blackfoot religious beliefs and ceremonies, and at length the Chief stated that he would like to have a Beaver Ceremony if only he had the money to pay for the feast. The Chief is the only living "Beaver Man" (he owns the sacred Beaver Bundle, and is the only person qualified to conduct the Beaver Ceremony), and I am anxious to see the ceremony performed and so I handed him the twenty dollar bill I had in my wallet and promised to give him a like amount tomorrow if that would make enough to pay for the feast. My dough 123 796 122

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539 usual procedure was for the rifleman to pop a few bullets into his
411 mouth, moisten them with saliva, and spit one down the barrel after he had inserted the powder; the employment of this method multiplied the rate of fire enormously, and many an Indian who charged confidently upon a White man's empty gun died with a look of astonishment.

In using a "spit bullet," however, the rifleman was well advised to bear in mind that the missing linen patch served not only to seat the bullet snugly upon the powder but to cleanse the barrel of residue from the previous shot. A fouled barrel could mean that the bullet would not seat deep enough, and since a bullet midway of the barrel instead of on the powder charge where it belonged could mean an exploding gun, a good precaution was to rap the gun butt sharply on the ground in order to insure a proper seat for the spit bullet. This, of course, is why Magic Shoot, who had learned the White Man's secret but was keeping it from his pals, always struck the butt of his gun on the ground before firing. I suspect that what has come down to us as a shout of, "Haugh!" was originally the sound of Magic Shoot spitting a bullet down the gun barrel. Undoubtedly Magic Shoot's prowess with his rifle, along with the mystical aspect of the story, has been embroidered in the repetition of many tellings.

538 The adventures of Magic Shoot, which pretend to no living witnesses, can with at least some degree of confidence be set down as conventionalized embellishments upon an actual happening, but the Chief's next story, a story about the famous Piegan White Quiver, and his equally famous fog bundle, presents in both literal and figurative terms a somewhat mistier issue.

One of the more frangible hinges of the cultured intellect is a propensity to intrude into areas of human experience which are impervious to rationalistic mapping. Such headlong assaults upon the integument of mystical occurrence are a good bet to cockle the most tranquilly sophisticated brow, and the attempt to explain away the ability of White Quiver to command certain forces of nature—specifically, his power to whip up an instant fog—has scored my own intellectual visage with Neanderthal furrows of perplexity.

If White Quiver were, like Magic Shoot, a mythical or mythico-historical character from some cobwebby corner of Blackfoot legend, I could undoubtedly categorize his achievements on the basis of some cozily self-satisfying intellection. But such is not the case. White Quiver was a real person. He was, in fact, a contemporary of the Chief. And since the historicity of his fabulous accomplish-

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ments has been verified not only by members of his own tribe but by the enemies against whom he exercised his prowess, White Quiver's mystical powers cannot be attributed to the transmogrifying effect of verbal circulation but must be taken at face value. 538●

An additional note of personal interest attaches to this story through the fact that the Chief, himself, was both a witness to and a participant in the actions here described. White Quiver, who was the most celebrated of all Blackfoot horse-raiders, preferred to conduct most of his forays as solo performances. When he did agree to lead a party, he was careful to choose as his companions only the bravest and most accomplished of warriors; therefore, since the Chief was elected a member of a White Quiver war party, it follows that the Chief had by this time risen high in the regard of Blackfoot connoisseurs of the fine art of horse-histing. 538 721 622

. WHITE QUIVER DISPLAYS THE POWER OF THE FOG BUNDLE 721

This war party was led by White Quiver and Under Bull. Other members included Weasel Head, White Antelope, Makes-Cold-Weather, Flathead Eagle, White Eagle, White Running Wolf, Chewing Black Bones, and myself.

We started from Big Badger Creek, near Old Agency, and headed down to steal some horses from the Crows. We were all well mounted, and we made good time. Our first camp was west of Great Falls, and by the end of the third day we had reached Beaver Head [a butte located at the confluence of Pryor Creek with the Yellowstone River].

We located a Crow camp on the Elk River [the Yellowstone River] near Saw Mill [Saw Mill remains to this day the Blackfoot name for Billings, Montana]. At break of dawn we ran off a goodly number of Crow horses, but although we made all haste toward the north, the Crows overtook us at a stream north of Elk River which we called Deer Creek [possibly Big Coulee Creek]. [103]

When we spotted the Crows, we were high on a hill. When we spotted them coming they were still about from here to the bridge [perhaps three miles] away, and since the Crows outnumbered us by so many, I thought that probably we would simply cut out the best of the horses and make a run for it. We had just given the horses a wind break, and chances were that, unencumbered by a large horse herd, we could have outdistanced the Crows quite easily.

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corral, so Cross Guns and I crept up to the corral ready to run them off. The horses were not there. The Crees were smart enough to take their horses out to their night hiding place when it was too dark for any possible watchers to see what was going on, and my brother and I spent the whole night in a futile effort to find where the animals were hidden. We could find nothing in the brush, or along the creek where you might expect to find horses hidden, but toward dawn we thought we heard horses on a flat toward the south of the camp. Sure enough, we found a deep little wash that the Crees had converted into a corral by stretching ropes across in two places. We could have taken the horses right then, but it was already breaking daylight so we holed up for the day and made off with the horses the following night. Of the total of eleven horses, I allowed Cross Guns to take six and kept five for myself.

By traveling nights and hiding out days, we made it home in five nights.

Almost invariably the Chief ends his story-telling sessions with, "*Kèn-yai-au-wah-nay-náh-pi-quon.*" This translates literally into, "That's what the old White man says," but the satirical connotation which encompasses the phrase's true significance is missed completely until one becomes acquainted with the circumstances which gave original coinage to the expression. It all happened as follows:

Iron Breast, also known as First-To-Grab-A-Gun, married a woman of whom his father, old Tearing Lodge, did not approve. The woman was virtuous and hard-working, her only defect being that her hair was prematurely gray, but old Tearing Lodge was very unkind in his criticism of his daughter-in-law, complaining that his son had married a gray-haired old woman who was fit for nothing.

One night Tearing Lodge was seated in his teepee, smoking and talking with some of the other old men, quite unaware that his daughter-in-law, who had spent the afternoon repairing the old man's robes and clothing, was seated quietly in the shadows. After a while old Tearing Lodge began to say unpleasant things about his daughter-in-law, and finally the daughter-in-law spoke up. She said, "Why does Tearing Lodge say such unkind things about me? I have never harmed him in any way."

Now, this put Tearing Lodge in quite a spot, but the old fellow was equal to the situation. Pretending that he had not heard his daughter-in-law speak and that he was still unaware of her presence in the lodge, he addressed himself to his old cronies: "Yes, gentle-

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not miss the races that are to be held at the Starr School racecourse tomorrow afternoon, and Mary will spend the night at the White Grass home. I don't want to miss the races, either—I am still anxious to determine just how accurate my rendition of the event in "Horse-race" really was. 122

Saturday evening: Boiled tongue, green beans, boiled potatoes, bread and tea and canned blueberries.

I: "The tongue is not bad, Jim."

Jim: "It is?"

Joe Morning Gun, a close neighbor, stopped by, and of course the Chief invited him to stay for supper. Mr. Morning Gun is older, tall and slender, and very courteous and mild mannered. His black hair, which he wears rather long and parted in the middle, is covered when out-of-doors by a wide-brimmed, high-crowned gray sombrero. He is an Indian of the old school, and I like him very much.

Jim and the Chief are inordinately proud of my increasing facility with the Blackfoot language, and at supper they showed me off quite shamelessly to Joe by using my Blackfoot name exclusively and by asking me, in Blackfoot, to pass them everything on the table—whether they could reach it or not and whether they really wanted it or not. So I ate with one hand and with the other kept passing the bread (*nah-pat-yén*), the sugar (*náh-pi-nuan*), the salt (*ist-ik-tsip-o-ko*), the pepper (*áp-stah-kat-po-ko*), the catsup (*ish-pó-yópe*), etc. The literal translation of the Blackfoot word for pepper, by the way, is "tobacco taste" or "it tastes like tobacco." The word for catsup, *ish-pó-yópe*, which is also used to refer to mustard and to similar table sauces, translates as, "you use it when you eat." 122 123

Many of the foods that were introduced to the Blackfoots by the Whites have the prefix, *náhpi*, attached to them, but although *náhpi* is one of the first Blackfoot words I learned, I still don't know exactly what it means—and I have decided that nobody else does either. I first encountered *Náhpi* as the schizoid old gent who is the central figure in Blackfoot mythology (in the Chief's story, "Why the White Man Will Never Reach the Sun," the *Náhpi* image is composed of two separate characters, one named *Mokáhki:* wise, and the other named *Mut-tsáhp-tsi:* crazy or stupid; but in the common run of *Náhpi* stories—and there are hundreds of them—*Náhpi* appears as a single character who is alternately clever enough to create the world, and stupid enough to get into all kinds of dutch with the very animals he has created). My search for a valid English translation of the word *náhpi* (which most scholars have translated as "old man," but which translation does not satisfy me) turned up 196 196 538 196

196 "old man," "old White man," "crazy old White man," and a few others. One informant suggested that the phrase does not mean "old White man" but rather "White old man" (there is a significant difference between these two translations) and I would be inclined to go along with him if only for the reason that sometimes the Blackfoots in their prayers to the sun will refer to the sun not as *Nah-tóh-sey* but as *Náh-pi*. "Old White man" would refer to an elderly Caucasian, whereas "White old man" could refer to an elderly (hence, in the Indian belief, wise) man of any race.

A further shred of evidence is present in the fact that when a Blackfoot wishes to refer to a Caucasian, he takes the term *Náhpi* and adds the suffix *quon* to it. I think that I am fairly safe in saying that in its broadest application, *quon* means "man" in the sense of "person," but of course things are not that simple. I haven't really
[193] studied the thing out, but my observations thus far suggest that *quon* functions as sort of a restrictive diminutive and that when stuck onto the end of a noun it carries the meaning that the noun in question is one part of a larger group. Perhaps a good translation of *quon* would be "son of." For instance, while the term for the
[101] Blackfoots as a group is *Siksikáu*, the term for an individual (male) of the Blackfoot Nation is *Siksikáiquon*. "Dog" is *imitái*, and "puppy" is *imitáiquon*. (The Blackfoot term for a half-grown dog is, *seh-súmp*, but let's not get into that!) At any rate, I am a *Náhpiquon*, but in regard to whether this means that I am a "Sun-person," "The-son-of-a-foolish-old-white-man," or something in between, your guess is as good as mine.

The Blackfoot term for whiskey is *náh-pi-ò-kee*, a form combining *náhpi* with *och-kée*, the Blackfoot word for water: hence, the usual
122 translation of, "White Man's water." After supper we all had a shot, and this was the first time since my arrival that the Chief was the one to suggest a drink--undoubtedly out of hospitality to our guest.

Our guest, Joe Morning Gun, left early, and for an hour then I
538 recorded the Chief's telling of the origin of the Beaver Bundle. The
778 Bundle contains, among numerous other things, an albino crow and
[126] the dressed skins of many animals, and according to this tale the whole thing started right over the hill from the ranch, at Lower Saint Mary Lake. The story of the origin of the Beaver Bundle is in some respects reminiscent of the story of Round Scabby Robe, but the Beaver Bundle story points up much more strongly the relationship in Blackfoot religious belief between the Underwater Persons and the Sun.

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didn't stay with me very well, and by supper I was starved and ate a hell of a lot of moose meat. I was quite surprised that both Jim and the Chief were enthusiastic about the mustard greens, stewed tomatoes and canned apricots that I added to the menu. I had supposed them merely tolerant of the fruits and vegetables which I have been forcing upon the table, but in future I shall no longer hesitate to act as dietitian.

The Chief ate marvelously, grunted away from the table, and immediately went to sleep on the sofa. Jim spun some tales until eight o'clock, at which time the Chief arose refreshed and ready to tell us some stories about early and contemporary Indian politics. Most of the stories were fragmented or, at best, anecdotal, but the one story that did have any form was really a good one: this story concerned a diplomatic mission to Washington which the Chief and Plenty Treaty had undertaken in 1935. Although the narrative was at times very funny—most of the laughs were at the expense of Mr. Plenty Treaty, I am afraid—I prized it less as a sample of the Chief's humor than as an indication of his fantastic memory for detail and his remarkable powers as an orator (I think that the Chief's comparing his pockets to arrow quivers should be set down among the great oratorical metaphors of all time).

THE BIG CLAIM

The Government owed us several million dollars for some land that they had taken from us, and for many years we had been trying to collect what was owed to us. Finally we hired a lawyer in Washington, D.C. He was the same age as I, and we Indians called him Bear Head. [Bear Head would be Mr. Serven, of the law firm, Serven, Joyce, Barlow and Goodman.]

It all happened this way: One day Bob Hamilton, the official interpreter for our tribe, informed me that there was to be an important meeting down at Helena. For the previous four years we had been attempting unrelentingly but without success to present our claim before the Federal Government, and this Helena conference was the result of a communication which I had sent to [United States Senator] B. K. Wheeler. B. K. Wheeler and his [law] partner were to be at the Helena meeting along with Bear Head and another official from Washington whom we called Morning Eagle. Also to be represented at the meeting were the Flatheads, the Gros Ventres, the Assiniboines, the Sioux and the Crows. Delegates from the Piegans in-

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knife. The knife, a gift to the Chief from his father, is very large and heavy. The blade, which is marked, *"Village Blacksmith, Watertown, Wis.,"* is twelve inches long, two and three-quarters inches wide, and three-eighths of an inch thick. The Chief says that he

Weasel Tail in Later Life

used the knife primarily to dig fox holes when he got caught out on the open prairie, but that about fifty years ago he loaned the weapon to a man named Weasel Tail who killed a bear with it. (Weasel Tail was one of the most famous of Piegan hunters, and I own an old photograph of him. The photo bears a striking resemblance to Maggie Bear Child, and upon inquiry I learned that Weasel Tail was, indeed, Maggie's father.) According to the story, Weasel Tail was charged by a grizzly, and he struck the bear in the mouth with the knife, knocking out some of its teeth and killing it "right now," as Jim says. I fully believe it, the knife being that formidable.

The bear-killing incident reminded the Chief of the time that Mad Wolf, a devil-may-care warrior, had killed a bear with a knife just for the hell of it, and this led the Chief into telling me some great stories of horse-stealing efforts against the Flatheads and Kootenai in the old days.

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Coat to show him where his son was. Just as they arrived, a "real bear" [a grizzly] was coming out of the shelter. The bear had killed Taking-Fine-Gun, and Iron Coat killed the grizzly in revenge for his son's death. Iron Coat said that Elk Chief could have the horse that Taking-Fine-Gun had captured. 721

When the two men returned and told of the death of Taking-Fine-Gun, Calf Robe said to Iron Coat, "I am sorry that your son is dead, but he should have stayed with the rest of our party. If he had done so, he would be alive right now."

Eagle Head said, "Calf Robe is right. We did our best to care for your boy. We did not want to go off and leave him, but he refused to come with us. It was not our fault that he was killed."

The three men who cared for Taking-Fine-Gun on the way home from the Kootenai country were Elk Chief, Eagle Head, and Calf Robe. All three of them lived to be old men, and it was not until recent years that they passed away. Calf Robe [O-nis-tái-yay] also went by the name of Home Gun [Ách-yah-pin-nah]; he was the father of Pete and Dan Home Gun, and also of Jim and Paul Home Gun, now deceased.

Although in telling the next two stories, "The Kootenai Ambush that Backfired" and "Bob-tailed Horse 'Guesses' a Kootenai," the Chief employed the pronoun "we," the Chief himself did not participate in these adventures; he used "we" merely to refer to "the Piegans." The employment of the first person plural nominative pronoun when relating an historical event involving one's tribe is a device commonly used by the Plains Indian, and this fact may explain why so many of our junior anthropologists keep turning up junior-age "veterans" of intertribal wars. 538 195

THE KOOTENAI AMBUSH THAT BACKFIRED

Knife,* Iron Coat, Turned-Up-Hat, and Mad Wolf were the leaders of a war party that started from right here on Cut Bank Creek and crossed the mountains to where Kalispell is today, on a trail where Cut Bank Chalet was later built, in order to steal some horses from the Flatheads. 721

We located a Flathead camp and took some horses, and as we were returning home, heading down the eastern slope of the mountains toward the Creek here, we found two dead Blackfoot men. The men had been killed just recently, and Iron Coat and Turned-Up-Hat became quite frightened. Turned-Up-Hat

* Knife, who was also known as Looks-Like-A-Bear, Onistáipokah, and several dozen other things, was the Chief's paternal grandfather. He was the owner of one of the very rare Blackfoot "bear knives."

Darkness came, but instead of everybody going to sleep, some 721
of the men gathered inside a lodge and began to play the stick game, also called "hand game." We waited for quite a while, but the stick game continued late into the night because one of the players was so clever that nobody could "guess him" [i.e., they could not determine in which hand he held the unmarked or "guess" bone]. The longer the game continued, the more angry Bob-tailed Horse became. Finally he said, "I'll guess him!" and walking up to the teepee he stepped inside and shot the man right through the head. Then he stepped outside and began calmly to reload his gun.

Not a single Kootenai man came out of the teepee; I guess they were too scared. The rest of the camp panicked and made for the brush, and we took all the horses and got away clean.

I attempted to lead the Chief into reciting some adventures in 124
which he, himself, had played a more central role, but I did not 538
have very good luck. The Chief definitely resents being prompted in his story-telling in any way, and although he obliged me with two tales, both were tearfully disappointing in their brevity.

Eagle Ribs, Tripod and myself left from Old Agency on foot. 721
It took us twenty days to get to Medicine Hat, where we stole some horses from the Crees. I took a mouse-colored horse with one glass eye. When we got back home, I gave the horse to Yellow Plume, who had married my sister, Lonely Woman.

Five of us--Brave Rock, Long-tongue Bird, Buffalo Berries, Morning Holler and myself--started from Belly River in Canada. In five nights we got to Round Brush, where we stole nineteen head of horses from the Crees. On the way back we took a shortcut and made it in three days. I took the pick of the horses, and the finest of all--a buckskin--I gave to my father. I also gave a horse to my sister, and one each to two girls, Pretty Owl and Isabelle.

At ten-thirty, just as we were all going to bed, the Home Gun 122
girls knocked on the door and said they wanted a ride home. I guess I am as bad as the Chief, because I got dressed and took them home. And I was so awakened by the night air, and so angry with myself for having catered to their damned arrogant whim (they were afraid of range cattle, they said) that I stayed awake most of the night. "Maybe they was looking for some meat, too," Jim said. And he laughed.

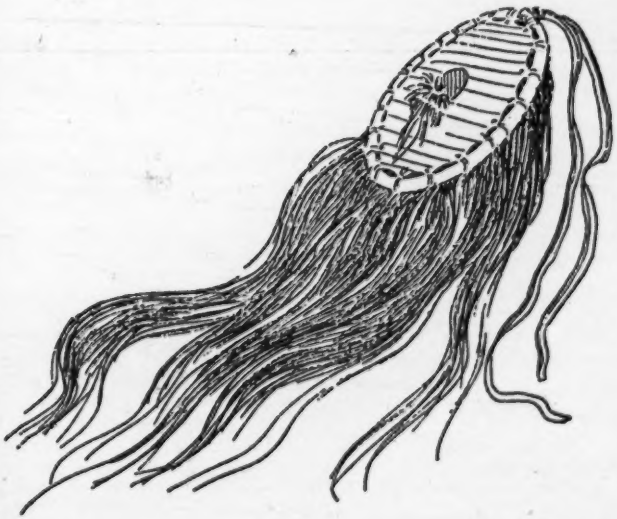
where my horse was, and by leading my horse to the edge of a bank I was able to mount and still hold onto my gun. 721 [726]

All of our party had gotten safely away [the Chief did not say whether the party managed to hang onto the horses they had stolen from the Crows, or whether they were left behind], and when I caught up with them they doctored my wound. The bullet had passed entirely through my arm, so there was no problem there, and the fellows cleaned up my arm, applied a poultice made by chewing the roots of a beargrass plant, and fashioned some splints from pieces of wood. [752]

It took us quite some time to get back to Belly River, and it was a long time before I finally regained full use of my arm. But regain full use of my arm I did, although, as you can see, my arm since that time has always been a little bit crooked. If I had gone to a White doctor, I probably would have lost my arm entirely. [Considering the penchant of surgeons of this period to amputate even the most superficially damaged limb, the Chief's final comment was not made without justification.]

The Chief's next story, a firsthand account of the final spilling of blood between the Blackfoot Nation and its traditional Indian ene- 538 726

727



54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana

538 726 miles to the south, represents not only the most authentically detailed narration of a Plains Indian war party ever recorded but an invaluable portrait of the desperate and somehow pathetic last days of a culture which had already heard the tolling of the knell. This verbal portrait is not entirely a pretty one—certainly not one to gratify the preconceptions of the romantic—for the Chief, as always, painted with a brush of complete and uncompromising honesty. The Old-timer spared neither himself nor anyone else in presenting the unvarnished facts, and the confident exactitude of his recall is a thing to be marveled at. The color of each horse, the clothing worn by his own party and by the enemy, the exact place a bullet from his gun struck an antelope: all this and much more he was able to tell me.

The war party here described is well known to history, and it bespeaks the uncommon modesty of the Chief that, until my first acquaintance with him in 1958, it had been believed that the last survivor of this adventure, a Blood Indian named Crazy Crow, had passed away twenty years before. The Chief's first mention of his participation in this historically important event was very casual, and it was not until now that I was able to induce him to relate the actualities of the Last Scalp Dance in any detail. But it has now been established beyond any possible doubt that the Chief himself is the final survivor of the affair, and listening to the old fellow recite the details of the last important Plains Indian war party, exactly as he had lived them, was to me every bit as thrilling as though Custer had suddenly popped from the shadows and asked me if I would like to know what really happened at the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

721 726 [484] The famous war party itself, which occupied a time of nearly one month and involved a round trip by the participants of more than one thousand miles, took place in the spring of 1889, but the events which eventually prompted the raid began more than two years previous to that date.*

[657] During the first few years following their shared tragedy of the near extinction of the buffalo, the Indian tribes of the Northern Plains lived in a situation of restless peace. Then one day in September of 1886, on the Blood Reserve just across the International Boundary in Canada, suddenly the peace was shattered. Ten horses

[114] * For his gentlemanly assistance in verifying the historicity of the Chief's last war party, and for many other kind favors, I am very grateful to Hugh A. Dempsey, archivist of the Glenbow Foundation of Calgary, Alberta, Canada and editor of the *Alberta Historical Review*.

54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana

remedy is sage tea, but he does not refuse the medications I offer him, and the syrup does seem to help. 122

After lunch, which consisted of some blissfully tender moose tenderloin which I had hidden away, I gave the Chief a large dose of cough syrup. It relieved his coughing long enough for him to get a good solid afternoon of much-needed sleep. The Chief ate well, as usual, but his cold is really pretty bad. During the late afternoon I attempted to grab a nap for myself, but once again a single fly was successful in keeping me bug-eyed awake.

Jim got back at six, and while I went down for water, Jim cooked supper. Apparently Jim has discovered some secret process of vulcanization, for he took some of the same tenderloin that I had cooked for lunch, the last of the fresh moose meat, and rendered it as tough as a saddle skirt. The dried moose meat is now hard and black, and I pray that it is more palatable than Jim's cooking because I will be living on it all the way back to Texas.

After supper, the Chief went right to bed. Jim went to the cupboard, came back holding up the booze bottle which contained about one good shot, and said, "Ask a now or you'll never get it some." I didn't want it, so Jim finished it off, and then we retired to the living-room to chat and work with the tape recorder until midnight.

Jim was anxious for me to play back the story about the magic shield, a story the Chief told me one day in Jim's absence. We have already been over the story a couple of times, but Jim says that it is his favorite ("It's a good story—it's the best I like"), and he wanted to go over it again, "Case if we might liable skipped out something." I am not terribly impressed by the story, and I think that Jim's fondness for it derives primarily from his passion always to champion the underdog. In this story, the underdog, a Blackfoot youth named Heavy-set Boy, wins out over all. 122 538

HEAVY-SET BOY AND THE MAGIC BUFFALO SHIELD 539

Once there was a young Blackfoot lad named Heavy-set Boy. Whenever his band made camp, Heavy-set Boy and his partner would go off by themselves to play. They would fashion small horses out of clay, and play at fighting the enemy and stealing horses from them.

One time a bunch of other boys went out from camp and began to tease Heavy-set Boy and his friend; they destroyed the clay horses that the two friends had made, and when Heavy-